A few words from the President…

With the gradual winding down of the COVID pandemic despite occasional recurrences, the Marstons Mills Historical Society has managed over more than two years to remain vital and connected to members. The availability of remote access through Zoom has meant that maintaining and initiating contact with members in areas outside the Village has become a regular feature of interaction, making it possible for members who would find it impossible to attend in-person meetings to become regular participants. In fact, only one monthly meeting session in two years has been in-person, which is described later in this issue of The Grist. For at least the foreseeable future, it is expected that we will continue with Zoom-based meetings whenever practical.

This issue of The Grist is dedicated to honoring the memory of previous President Barbara Hill, who passed away in May of this year. Barbara was a vital force in ensuring that the Society regularly met its goal of raising community awareness of important Marstons Mills history, as noted in the accompanying article.

- David Martin, President

REMEMBERING PAST PRESIDENT BARBARA HILL

Long-time Mills resident Barbara Hill passed away in May of this year. Passionate, artistically gifted and extremely witty, she was President of the MMHS for many years and brought her leadership, intellect and enthusiasm to the role during an important time in the Society’s early development. She organized activities, mounted displays of the Society’s artifacts, coordinated the significant interviewing of Mill residents who had long memories of life in the Village and increased Society membership during her years at the helm. We honor her memory for her important building of the Society that we enjoy today.

RACING IN MARSTONS MILLS

At the June 2022 meeting of the Society, Vice-President Rick Presbrey provided a talk on the history of racing in Marstons Mills. After a review of the interesting history of racing from antiquity to the present, he outlined how some sea captains of Cape Cod in the 19th century would ship in their race horses to Hyannis and then engage in competitions of horse-racing. Racing in Marstons Mills included horse-racing, car-racing for a brief period in the mid-1930's and sulky-racing at the Barnstable County Fair when it was held in what is today the Barnstable Golf Course. The name of the road known as Race Lane probably, although not definitively, derives from its one-mile straight stretch that enabled racing; some speculation, on the other hand, is that the name could have derived from a millrace of the Marstons Mills River, although this possibility is less likely. Research thus far has not determined when that road actually got its current name; it does appear that at least one possibility is that Aalto family used it for racing their sulky ponies.

The Mission of the Marstons Mills Historical Society is to foster an interest in the story of our village. We preserve historical images, documents and artifacts, research historic resources and support educational opportunities for all ages for villagers and other interested persons, in order to better understand and appreciate the past, present and future of
Coming Events…

- Tuesday, August 9, 2022: MMHS Regular Meeting, 2:00 p.m.
- Saturday, October 22, 2022: Historic House Tour, Marstons Mills, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

All are welcome!

**MMHS OFFICERS**
President: David Martin
Vice-President: Rick Presbrey
Secretary: Wendy Bierwith
Treasurer: Bebe Brock

**BOOK STORE**

Available for purchase at MMPL.

**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

- I / we wish to join the Society and enclose payment for my / our Individual Membership(s) at $15 each.
- I / we wish to renew my/our membership for 2022 at $15 each.
- I / we wish to make a charitable contribution to the Society to support the development of its Village Archives and the Preservation of its Collection.

$250 $150 $75 $25 $10 Other ______

Name: ______________________________________

Street / POB: ___________________________________

City: ______________________________  State: ______

Zip: _____________   E-mail: ______________________

- I / we wish to be notified about MMHS Meetings.

Please mail your check or bring it to the Library, marked for MMHS. Regular meetings are the 2nd Tuesday of the month, 2:00pm. Thank you!

The Marstons Mills Historical Society is a 501 (c) 3 Charitable Organization

P.O. Box 1375
Marstons Mills, MA 02648
marstonsmillshistorical.org

Comments and articles for submission should be sent to astephens@clamsnet.org.
The skilled use of a fine metal detector by investigator Tony Mulone has successfully revealed still more artifacts from the surroundings of two public buildings and three private historical homes in the Mills. A special exhibit was held in January and February of this year at the Marstons Mills Public Library. Items displayed there included old coins, a musket ball, old spoons, a giant screw used in farming, glass bottles, a large number of kitchen implements from the 19th century, a flat iron that was heated on top of a metal wood stove, a handle for lifting the metal cover on top of the fire built into wood stoves and others. Arranged by Archivist Dianne Potter, the display was seen by numerous Library patrons and visitors. At this writing, Tony has resumed detecting at yet another historic home—this time locating some metal toys supposedly used by children many years ago. Anyone who would like to invite Tony to try his skills on the outside of their property can contact Tony at 508-982-3436 or tonymulonejr@gmail.com. Any artifacts can be given to the homeowner to keep unless they would like to loan them to the Society for future displays.

DETECTOR UNEARTHS MORE ARTIFACTS

The February and March Zoom meetings of the Society featured opportunities to review and identify a set of black and white photographs of the Mills taken by an itinerant photographer between 1905 and 1915 (see Summer 2020 issue of The Grist). The great variety of photographs include farm scenes, scenes of ponds in the Mills, two of the stores that operated at the junction of Rt. 149 and River Road, several residents of the Village in different activities such as acting in a play at Liberty Hall, ice-boat racing on a frozen pond (possibly Middle Pond), the now-famous photograph of the 1930 airplane being refueled at Cash Market because there was no source of fuel at the Airfield at the time and residents in a horse-drawn sleigh on a frozen pond, among others. This collection has been cataloged in digital form; requests for viewing on-line should be made to David Martin at davidmartindr@aol.com.

SOCIETY IDENTIFIES OLD PHOTOS

Although the Fuller Farmhouse is now gone, the surrounding area is being prepared by the Barnstable Land Trust for public access. Representatives of the Trust provided a brief tour of the area as well as explanations of future plans at the May meeting of the Society. Tentative plans include a barn which can be used for workshops and classes, a walking trail, a parking area, and an explanatory plaque describing the historic aspects of what was known for many years as the Fuller Farm. It is expected that later in 2022 some of these plans will have come to fruition.

FULLER FARM PLANS

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In the 1930’s a large building known as the Roseland Ballroom stood on the east side of Route 149. It was the site of big-band performances and jazz singers as part of the Cape Cod entertainment scene. Later the building deteriorated and was a victim of the 1944 Hurricane. When it was finally demolished, Roseland Terrace was constructed around where it had stood, and a number of single-family homes were constructed on the site. In May several Society members walked or drove around the periphery to see where the Ballroom had stood, as a part of Mills history.

**Barnstable County Fair Poster Trove**

Society Member Larry Dick has contributed a fine collection of documents related to the Barnstable County Fair, particularly from the years when the Fair was held in the Mills. Larry’s parents were co-presidents of the Fair in the past, and the collection has been carefully cataloged by Dianne Potter. Items include color posters announcing the Fair from nearly every year of its operation, bumper stickers, small items advertising the Fair, and photographs of Fair events. Anyone wishing to view the collection may contact David Martin at 508-527-0460 to arrange an appointment at the Marstons Mills Public Library to enjoy them. An exhibit of the Fair materials was held at the Sturgis Library at the time of the New Year. (Photo courtesy of David Martin/MMHS)

**Roseland Ballroom Site Explored**

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**T-Shirts and Hoodies Running Out!**

Don’t delay! The specially designed T-shirts and Hoodie-style Sweatshirts with the MMHS Logo and the photograph of the 1929 plane from the Airfield being refueled at Cash Market, are still available for purchase at the Marstons Mills Public Library but supplies are dwindling. Both styles are available in Cardinal (red) and Ash (gray) in most sizes from Small to Extra Large. T-shirts are $23 each and sweatshirts are $39 each. They are available during regular Library hours. Call 508-428-5175 or visit mmpl.org.
HISTORIC BUILDING TOUR-NEED HOSTS

In 2016, a special six-site Historic House and Building Tour took place as an important event by the Society. Plans are currently under way for another Tour, this one scheduled for Saturday, October 22, 2022, rain or shine. This Tour will have some of the same buildings as in 2016 (Airfield, Burgess House, and Underground House), but will also include some buildings that were not part of the 2016 tour: the preserved Crocker Farm (1750) and the complete award-winning restoration of the 1828 Seth Crocker House, among others. Plans are currently being made, and we need several Society members to serve as Hosts at each site, welcoming and monitoring visitors as they visit. Potential volunteers are invited to contact David Martin at davidmartindr@aol.com if they are interested in taking a two-hour turn as a host at a particular site.

SANDY SNEAKERS WALKS THE VILLAGE

Marstons Mills is on the cusp of magical. A potpourri of picturesque people past and present.

Did you know a stately house and charming cottage abutting the Marstons Mills post office is the site of the original homestead of merchant Captain James H. Hallett? All that remains of the Hallett house are bricks from the original fireplace that are now placed in the garden and behind the cottage.

Captain Hallett, a devoted family man, traveled to Boston in the 1870’s during the yuletide season to gather Christmas gifts for his wife and children. He included a visit with wool merchant Mr. Isaac Taylor for whom he did “out-door” business. It was during this visit to the Boston Harbor warehouse that Hallett had an untimely death. A fatal accident that occurred when he lost his balance standing by an open shaft and fell five floors. He died instantly. Captain Hallett’s death was awful and unexpected; he was only forty years old. Leaving behind the loves of his life—a wife and two kids. He is buried in the Marstons Mills Cemetery on scenic route 149.

Captain Hallett was a merchant seaman and family man that left a legacy with infrastructure of waterways in the Mills. His spirit flows on.

Now, the stately residence reminiscent of a sea captain’s home is perched on the historic site. Custom designed by multidisciplined creative resident, homemaker, wife, author, screenwriter and business woman Kathy Aspden, the house with covered porches and Queen Anne architectural element sails into modern times.

The house is flanked by a charming cottage that was relocated from Chatham on Oyster Pond by Marstons Mills house mover Bob Hayden in 2006, making the turn in front of

continued on page 6...
the Cash Market delivering the cottage to 50 River Road. This cottage is the writer’s retreat that gave birth to Marstons Mills bestsellers. The series is an insightful portrayal of family in which the destiny of love, betrayal, forgiveness, loss, faith and hope cannot be denied. The books flowed from the pen to paper in the cottage while looking out a window to where Captain James Harvey Hallett lived with his beloved family.

Something about Marstons Mills that brings out the best.
‘till next time...Sandy Sneakers